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A Preliminary Report to the Redevelopment Agency on
THE SELECTION OF A PROJECT AREA IN THE
SOUTH OF MARKET REDEVELOPMENT AREA

November 27, 1953

San Francisco Department of City Planning



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

100 LARKIN STREET • CIVIC CENTER • SAN FRANCISCO 2, CALIFORNIA

November 27, 1953

Dr. J. Joseph Hayes, Chairman
Redevelopment Agency of San Francisco
512 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco 2, California

Dear Dr. Hayes:

Transmitted herewith is a preliminary report on the selection of a project area in the South of Market Redevelopment Area, submitted in partial compliance with the work order of the Redevelopment Agency dated June 3, 1953.

Work on this study commenced on July 27, 1953, and terminated on November 27, 1953, and was carried out by Mr. Robert W. Cook, Assistant City Planner, under the supervision of Mr. James R. McCarthy, Chief of the Land Planning Division of this department.

As explained in the report, according to the understanding reached during the course of this study, the Department of City Planning is not submitting at this time a recommendation for a specific project area and a preliminary plan therefor. Rather this report recommends to the Redevelopment Agency several potential project areas for further consideration, with the understanding that when potential users are more certainly committed to participating in the redevelopment program in the South of Market Redevelopment Area, a definite project area definition can be made and a preliminary plan as required by the Community Redevelopment Law can be formulated.

There is also transmitted to your Agency, in addition to this report:

- 1) A series of maps, at a scale of 50 feet equal 1 inch, of each of the nineteen blocks contained in the South of Market Redevelopment Area, showing existing land use, degree of structural soundness of the buildings, open use or vacant land, and suggested project area boundaries.
- 2) A series of photographs showing conditions which typify those found in the South of Market Redevelopment Area, and which tend to substantiate the need for and desirability of applying the redevelopment process to this Area. These photographs were taken by the students of the California School of Fine Arts, under the direction of Instructors Minor White and Frederick W. Quandt. The helpful cooperation of Mr. Ernest Mundt, Director of the School, is hereby acknowledged.

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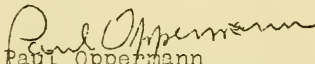
3) A map showing Average Yearly Subsidence, and

4) A map showing community facilities presently existing in the Redevelopment Area.

In undertaking the redevelopment of the South of Market Redevelopment Area, your Agency will be utilizing the redevelopment powers pertaining to industrial redevelopment established in the California Community Redevelopment Law. Most of the redevelopment programs in effect throughout the Nation are devoted to improving existing residential areas under the Housing Act of 1949. The South of Market program, however, has a different orientation, leading to the redevelopment for industrial purposes of an area of extremely mixed uses. It will remove conditions which are socially and economically detrimental to the city and will make valuable land available for more productive use.

Trusting that this study will be of assistance to your Agency in its desire to carry out a redevelopment program in the South of Market Redevelopment Area, I remain

Yours very truly,


Paul Oppermann
Director of Planning



C O N T E N T S

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Letter of Transmittal

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Area and 1950 Population by Block.

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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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The South of Market Redevelopment Area divides readily into three Sections, each of which has conditions different from the others.

It is recommended that the redevelopment program be used, insofar as possible, to redevelop each Section as a whole.

The nature and condition of the uses in each of the Sections suggests an order of priority in redevelopment programming.

It is recommended that redevelopment efforts be directed first to Section II, bounded by Folsom, Fifth, Bryant, Sixth, Brannan, Seventh, Bryant and Eighth Streets; followed by Section I and finally Section III.



THE SELECTION OF A PROJECT AREA IN THE SOUTH OF MARKET REDEVELOPMENT AREA

This report is concerned with an analysis of Redevelopment Area D as designated by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and described as the South of Market Redevelopment Area, to determine which blocks are most feasible for redevelopment project areas. (See Map I.)

I LAND USE AND CIRCULATION

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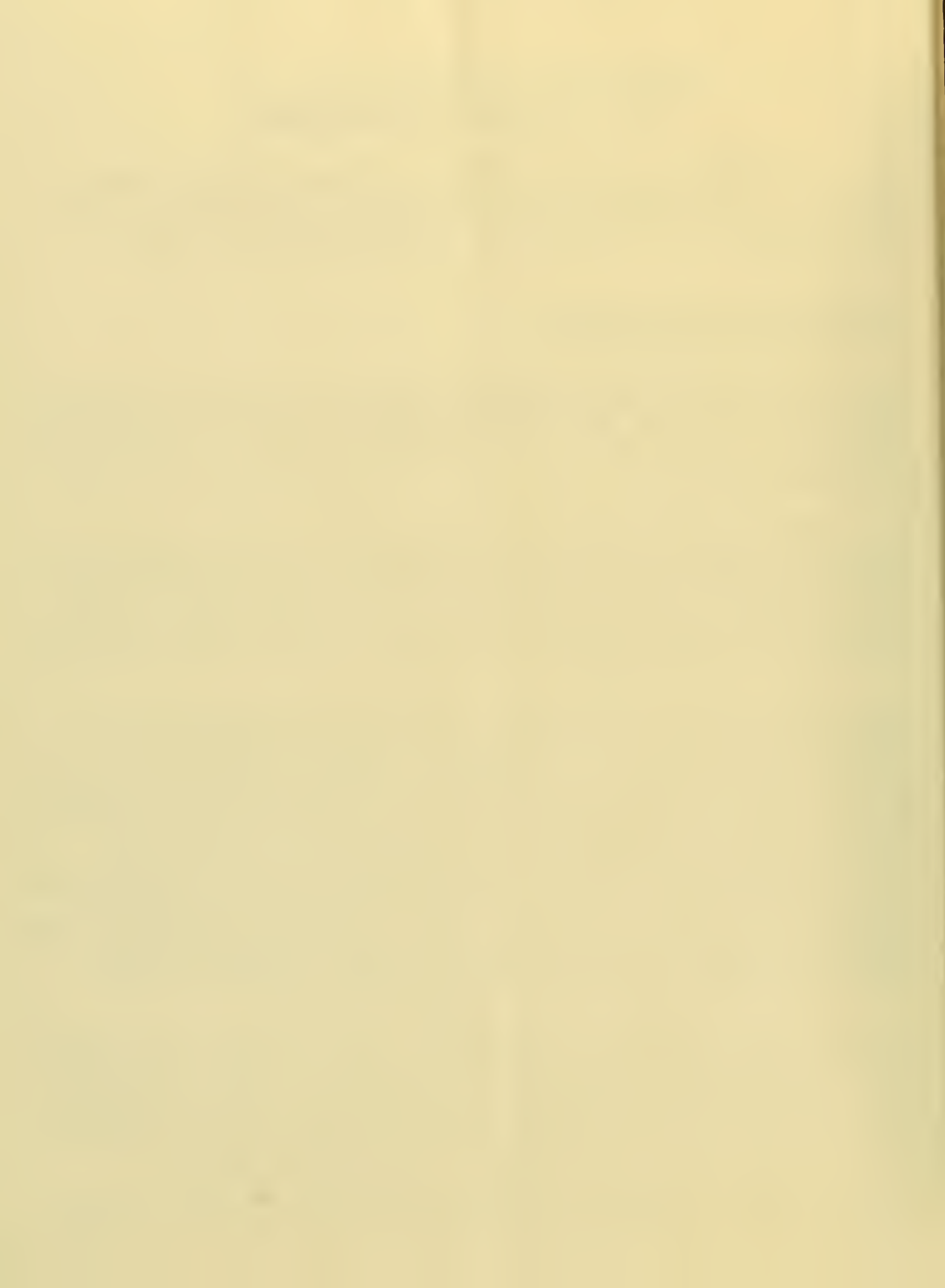
The City-wide Land Use Plan provides for industrial use of the land in the South of Market district, primarily in the light industrial classification. Since the Land Use Plan limits industry in San Francisco to comparatively level land adjacent to the Bay shore, the South of Market district constitutes a considerable portion of the total industrial area of the city.

Prior to 1920 that portion of the South of Market district within the South of Market Redevelopment Area was predominantly residential with scattered commercial and industrial uses. The present zoning ordinance, adopted in 1921, placed the major portion of the South of Market area in a light industrial classification. Today the area is predominantly industrial and commercial with only pockets of residential use remaining.

The residential structures existing in 1940 were almost all built prior to 1919. The density of residential structures in the Redevelopment Area has decreased by approximately twenty percent between 1940 and 1950, but, because of conversions within the remaining buildings, the number of dwelling units has increased by approximately two percent. There is no block in the Area in which residential use exceeds fifty percent of the uses. There are only five blocks of the nineteen blocks in the Area in which the residential use in a sub-block -- a portion of a block bounded by alleys on two sides -- exceeds fifty percent, and three in which it is between forty and fifty percent. (These are shown on Map II, Percent of Residential Use*) There are six blocks that contain almost no residential land use: Assessor's Blocks 3752, 3754, 3758, 3759, 3760, and 3761. Four of these blocks are in the path of the Bayshore Freeway and have been partly or wholly cleared for the freeway and ramps.

Only eight percent of the dwelling units in the Area are owner-occupied. The 1940 census classified 49 percent of the dwelling units as being without private bath or in need of major repairs. The 1950 census showed that 53 percent of the dwelling units were in this category. In 1940 there were four percent of the dwelling units occupied by more than 1.51 persons per room. In 1950 eight percent of the dwelling units were in this category. (See Maps III and IV.)

* A structure is classified as being in residential use when the proportion of floor area devoted to that use exceeds the area devoted to other uses.



The objective of the Land Use Plan is to develop the South of Market district for industrial use and to eliminate the residential uses remaining there. The proposed new zoning ordinance, being prepared by the City Planning Commission, will place most of the Area in an M1, or light industrial, classification and will thereby prohibit the construction of new residential buildings in the Area. This ordinance would serve as a long term means of achieving the objective of the Land Use Plan. Redevelopment will accomplish this objective more directly.

Circulation in the Area is described in the Trafficways Plan and the One-way Street Plan of the Master Plan. The key to the circulation pattern in the Area is the Bayshore Freeway and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge which cut a swath through the Area from west to east between Harrison and Bryant Streets. Some of the major streets in the Area, all 82.5 feet in width, are included in the one-way street system. Future inclusion of Third and Fourth Streets and Howard and Folsom Streets into the one-way system is possible and should be taken into consideration in any project area plan developed. The minor streets in the Area -- those within the 100-vara blocks -- are mostly so narrow as to be classified as alleys and are simply local access streets. They can be considered for closing in any project plan without affecting the major circulation system adversely. A revised land use pattern for industrial use, in fact, will require the closing of most of the minor streets.

For the most part the South of Market Redevelopment Area is flat land, the maximum elevation being between fifty and sixty feet, which occurs in only one block. With respect to this factor, the Area is most suitable for industrial use. (See Map V)

There is a natural factor that is a deterrent to industrial development, i.e., subsidence. The Redevelopment Area is, in part, on filled land. In some places the land is quite stable, but there are other portions of the Area which are quite unstable. The block most affected by subsidence is block 3753, bounded by Fifth, Sixth, Harrison and Folsom Streets. Detailed surveys of soil conditions were not made in the course of this study. It is recommended that competent soils engineering advice be secured on subsurface conditions and as an aid in determining foundation requirements when a project area is selected. (Transmitted separately are maps and data on annual subsidence throughout the area and on hard bottom and bedrock contours.)

II DIVISION OF REDEVELOPMENT AREA INTO THREE SECTIONS

.....

In this study the Redevelopment Area has been divided into three sections, each of which has conditions different from the others. (See Map VI.) It is recommended, for reasons described below, that major efforts be made to effect the redevelopment first in Section II.

Section I is bounded by Ninth, Mission, Sixth, Folsom, Eighth and Howard Streets. Section II is bounded by Eighth, Folsom, Fifth, Bryant, Sixth, Brannan, Seventh, and Bryant Streets. Section III is bounded by Fifth, Folsom, Hawthorne, Harrison, Second, Brannan, Third, and Bryant Streets.

Section I is the most heavily populated, containing proportionately the greatest residential use of any of the three sections. Except for the Mission Street and Sixth Street frontages it is characterized by the highest incidence of family occupancy. The school population that is to be found in the Redevelopment Area is largely concentrated in Section I. The subblocks fronting on Mission Street contain a few residential hotels that cater to single men at very low rates, but are primarily devoted to commercial and industrial uses. Sixth Street also has a high proportion of residential hotels, the ground floors of which are used for commercial purposes.

Section II contains some blocks with no residential uses, and others with an extremely mixed pattern of residential and industrial uses. Three blocks of the seven included in Section II have been cleared by the Division of Highways for the Bayshore Freeway, thereby creating an openness that could not have been attained as readily without extensive redevelopment. Block 3779, bounded by Sixth, Seventh, Brannan and Bryant Streets, is one of the most outstanding examples of mixed uses to be found in the Redevelopment Area. It contains large industrial uses, open uses such as lumber yards and storage yards, small residences ranging from single-family buildings to multiple-family apartments, and commercial shops. Section II also contains the area of greatest subsidence in the Redevelopment Area. The most outstanding block in this respect is Assessor's Block 3753, bounded by Fifth, Sixth, Harrison and Folsom Streets. This block offers a picture of truly inadequate, substandard, blighted housing. Some of the structures, because of subsidence and the raising of the streets to grade, are from one-half story to one story below the sidewalk level and many of them have been shored up in an attempt to sustain their questionable lives.

Section III contains large residential occupancy in two of its seven blocks. Block 3751, bounded by Third, Fourth, Harrison, and Folsom Streets is the only block with a high proportion of residential structures. Along the Third Street frontage of five of the seven blocks in Section III there are many hotels like those on Sixth Street which cater to men at minimal rates. This area along Third Street is a natural part of the area centering at Third and Howard Streets,

outside the designated Redevelopment Area. The special kind of social problem which this represents, and which is currently receiving study by all of the departments and agencies of the City concerned, at the request of the Board of Supervisors, is such that it is recommended that redevelopment of these frontages along Third Street be deferred until a solution to this particular problem as a whole is developed.

III RECOMMENDED ORDER OF REDEVELOPMENT

.....

1. Section II

It is in Section II of the Redevelopment Area that land clearance is already occurring -- under the auspices of the State Division of Highways. Application of the redevelopment process under the Community Redevelopment Law in any or all of the blocks in Section II would result in a substantial rejuvenation and revitalization of a segment of the Redevelopment Area lying at the gateway to the downtown district of the City. The character and quantity of blight in this section, resulting from mixed uses, is as great or greater than in the other sections, the family relocation problem will be less than in Sections I and III, and the types of reuse possibilities inherent in the section are more diverse than in either of the other two sections.

Following is a block-by-block description and discussion of this Section.

Assessor's Block 3753, bounded by Fifth, Sixth, Harrison and Folsom Sts.

As indicated earlier, this block is the one most affected by subsidence, and is notable for warped window frames, and distorted door frames, cracking walls, leaning buildings, and sunken buildings.

The instability of the land in this block is one of the major contributing factors to the blight that exists. This is quite apparent in the unsound residential structures as well as the other smaller commercial and industrial structures in the block which are flimsy and ramshackle. There are very few sound structures in this block. Of these, the largest is a laundry fronting on Folsom Street. This block has the highest incidence of vacant land and/or open use of any in the entire Redevelopment Area. Of the 10.42-acre total area of the block, 3.11 acres are devoted to vacant land and/or open use. This high incidence of open use may be at least partly a result of the instability of the land.

Suggested Use: Truck Terminal

As is well known the trucking industry has experienced a phenomenal growth since 1940. This is particularly so in San Francisco. Because of the unique physiographical circumstances involved in the location of San Francisco, trucking is of especial importance to the functional economy of the city. There are many trucking firms in San Francisco which find it very difficult to provide themselves with adequate terminal facilities, thereby creating a significant traffic problem by loading and unloading and resorting the loads of their trucks while parked partially or wholly in the streets.

There is another group of truckers that contribute to this problem in the same way. These are the trucking firms whose main base

of operation is outside of San Francisco, but which regularly, or fairly regularly, serve San Francisco industries. Many of these truckers have found it economically infeasible to provide themselves individually with adequate terminal facilities in this city.

There is also a growing recognition of the need for a consolidated pickup and delivery service. This would obviate the multiplicity of calls by large over-the-road trucks to pick up and deliver less-than-truckload lots of goods at the multitude of shippers and receivers throughout the city.

Discussions with truck operators indicate a very strong interest on the part of some in establishing a consolidated trucking terminal facility, and at least one trucking firm has had discussions with your staff in this regard.

Block 3753, the subsiding block, would serve as an ideal location for such a terminal facility, and, conversely, this use would seem to be well suited to this unstable land. It would be economically feasible to construct proper docks with warehouse space above them, and to pile to hard bottom or bedrock, thereby providing a solid foundation. The balance would be paved at grade and at such times as the paving needed to be replaced or rehabilitated the grade could be reestablished to conform with the street grade.

The State Division of Highways is considering a statement of policy concerning the use of the land under the elevated portions of the freeways in San Francisco with special reference to the possibility of parking truck-trailers under the freeway in the South of Market Redevelopment Area. This could provide an equipment storage area for the truck terminal facility herein recommended, thereby leaving the whole of the terminal site free for the load transferring operation.

The location of a truck terminal in block 3753 would be most satisfactory in terms of the street system, both existing and proposed. From this block the trucks would have to travel only to Seventh and Harrison Streets to gain access to the Bayshore Freeway, Alemany Boulevard, Junipero Serra and El Camino Real southbound, and they could leave the Bayshore northbound at Seventh and Bryant Streets. To gain access to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge they would travel almost exclusively on wide one-way streets: Harrison and Bryant. They could gain access to the Embarcadero Freeway (and ultimately the Golden Gate Bridge) on Folsom and Beale Streets. They can gain entrance to the Central Business District via Sixth Street. They would be able to go out Third Street to the eastern and southeastern portions of the city. In terms of the trafficways pattern of the city, a truck terminal facility would be most satisfactorily located in this block. It is recommended that efforts be extended in this direction.

Assessor's Block 3754, bounded by Sixth, Seventh, Harrison, and Folsom Sts

This block contains very few residential structures. The condition of the structures of all uses in this block is, on the whole, rather good. The area devoted to residential use does not amount to more than an acre and a quarter of the total of 10.42 acres. The park, Columbia Square, occupies 2.5 acres in this block or about a quarter

of the total area, and it is conceivable that when Columbia Square is changed from a parking lot to a temporary school site the bits of structural decay in this block might be excised. Generally speaking the condition of block 3754 in terms of the proposed industrial use of the South of Market area is rather satisfactory. It is recommended that no consideration be given to this block at this time.

Assessor's Block 3755, bounded by Seventh, Eighth, Harrison and Folsom Streets

This block does contain a rather significant amount of residential use. The condition of the residential structures ranges from fair to extremely poor in terms of present health and safety standards. The balance of the block is occupied by four large industrial concerns and a few lesser ones. The four are the Galland Laundry, the Peerless Laundry, the United Parcel Service and the Rees Blow Pipe Company. The United Parcel Service has indicated that it desires to double its present facilities by providing a 275 foot frontage on Folsom Street as well as on Harrison Street. This would displace somewhat more than fifty percent of the residential structures presently existing in that block. It would leave a strip of residences immediately to the east of the United Parcel Service plant, fronting on Langton Street, and another strip across the alley and to the rear (easterly) of the Galland Laundry on Rodgers Street. It is conceivable that the Galland Laundry might wish to expand its plant and replace those few residences adjacent to it. There is a further possibility that the Rees Blow Pipe Company might wish to expand its plant facility to the west and remove some of the residential uses between it and the United Parcel Service. There are two or three parcels that the Peerless Laundry may assume title to in order to consolidate its plant facilities and allow for plant expansion. If such expansion of existing industries could be effected there would probably remain one or two parcels of approximately an acre each. Such small sites may be attractive to new firms displaced by other public works, such as the Embarcadero Freeway, or the parking lot proposed by the Parking Authority between Minna, Natoma, Third, and Fourth Streets. This would be a most satisfactory redevelopment project area in terms of modernizing existing plant facilities as well as replacing blighted residential structures, and it is recommended that full consideration be given at this time to this block.

Assessor's Block 3758, bounded by Seventh, Eighth, Bryant, and Harrison Streets

This block is completely owned by the California State Division of Highways for the purposes of the Bayshore Freeway right-of-way, except for the parcel occupied by the Franklin Elementary School.

Assessor's Block 3759, bounded by Sixth, Seventh, Bryant, and Harrison Streets

This block is almost entirely owned by the Division of Highways. That portion which has not been acquired, fronting on Sixth Street, is extremely blighted and should be razed in its entirety. The southern portion of the block fronting on Bryant Street is being held by the Division of Highways as possible sites for some of those industries that will be displaced when preparing the right-of-way for the

Embarcadero Freeway. It is recommended that the remainder of this property be included for early consideration for redevelopment.

Assessor's Block 3760, bounded by Fifth, Sixth, Bryant, and Harrison Sts.

This block contains some rather satisfactory and recently constructed structures on the Harrison Street frontage. On the Bryant Street frontage, however, the structures are singularly poor. If judged by their external appearance it is remarkable that they have not yet fallen down and only somewhat less remarkable that they have not been razed at the inducement of one or more of the city agencies charged with the maintenance of the public health, safety and welfare. It is recommended that consideration be given to tying in the Bryant Street frontage with a project in an adjacent block.

Assessor's Block 3779, bounded by Sixth, Seventh, Brannan, and Bryant Sts.

In this block, also referred to earlier, there is a large pocket of residential use complemented by many types of industrial and commercial use. This is probably the most mixed block in the entire Redevelopment Area. There are very few sound structures in this block, which few are fortunately in industrial or commercial use and might well be retained in a redevelopment project plan. The balance of the block, more than 8.5 acres in extent, could be cleared to provide a site or sites for large industrial buildings. Being situated south of the Bayshore Freeway, this site is served by spur tracks. The Land Use Plan and the proposed zoning ordinance place this block in a heavy industrial classification. In addition to removing an isolated residential pocket, industrial redevelopment in this block will attract a different type of user than the other blocks in the Redevelopment Area due to its heavier use classification and the rail service afforded.

2. Section I

Section I, as was indicated earlier, is the area with the greatest concentration of family occupancy in the Redevelopment Area. If Section I and Block 3751 in Section III could be redeveloped at one time, then the families in the South of Market Redevelopment Area, with the exception of Section II, would be removed for the most part. Their continued presence in the area requires the existence of such community facilities as schools, churches, community centers, and shopping facilities near at hand. So long as Section I and block 3751 in Section III remain as areas of family concentration, so also must these community facilities remain to serve them. Therefore, it is proposed that when the time is propitious all five of the blocks in Section I and block 3751 in Section III be redeveloped in concert. It is reasonable to assume that when family residences occur in concentration, even in such an area of mixed use as the South of Market area, they do, to a marked degree, protect or insulate themselves from the effects of industrial or commercial encroachment. The general condition of the residential buildings in Section I and block 3751 in Section III is not as bad from a structural and environmental standpoint as the general condition of the residential buildings in Section II.

3. Section III

In Section III, containing seven blocks, there is a relatively low incidence of residential use. In five blocks, namely 3750, 3752, 3761, 3762, and 3763, the residential use is negligible. Further, the condition of the industrial structures is rather good. The incidence of industrial use is higher in this Section than either of the others.

More than half of the blocks in this Section contain a large number of cheap hotels that accomodate single persons. As was indicated earlier, this area contains a social problem that cannot be solved simply through redevelopment, so it is recommended that these hotels remain until such time as a real solution to this social problem has been determined.

In summary, it is recommended that the first project area or areas be selected from Section II. It would be most desirable if all of the projects in Section II as outlined above could be realized. Then Sections I and III, having a lesser priority than Section II, ought to follow in the redevelopment programming of the South of Market Redevelopment Area.

However, should private enterprise be interested in a self-supporting project in either Section I or III, this recommendation does not mean to imply that full encouragement to such an endeavor should not be given by the Agency. The series of maps transmitted to you show in detail the parcels within each block in Sections I and III that might be considered as potentially subject to the redevelopment process.

IV PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

.....

Redevelopment in the South of Market Redevelopment Area should strive to:

- 1) Eliminate the narrow interior alleys in large blocks. No street should have a width of less than 50 feet.
- 2) Establish a reasonable setback from the street line for landscaping.
- 3) Provide off-street parking in sufficient quantity to accommodate the customers and employees of the industrial establishments. Such facilities may be pooled within a project area. Parking areas should be attractively landscaped.
- 4) Provide adequate off-street loading facilities to accommodate the largest trucks and trailers that may reasonably be expected to serve the plants.
- 5) Provide such structural standards that buildings will remain sound despite the relative lack of stability of the land.

These are the most important factors to be considered in the development of site plans by potential project area users and are fundamental requisites for the development of a sound industrial project area preliminary plan.

RR

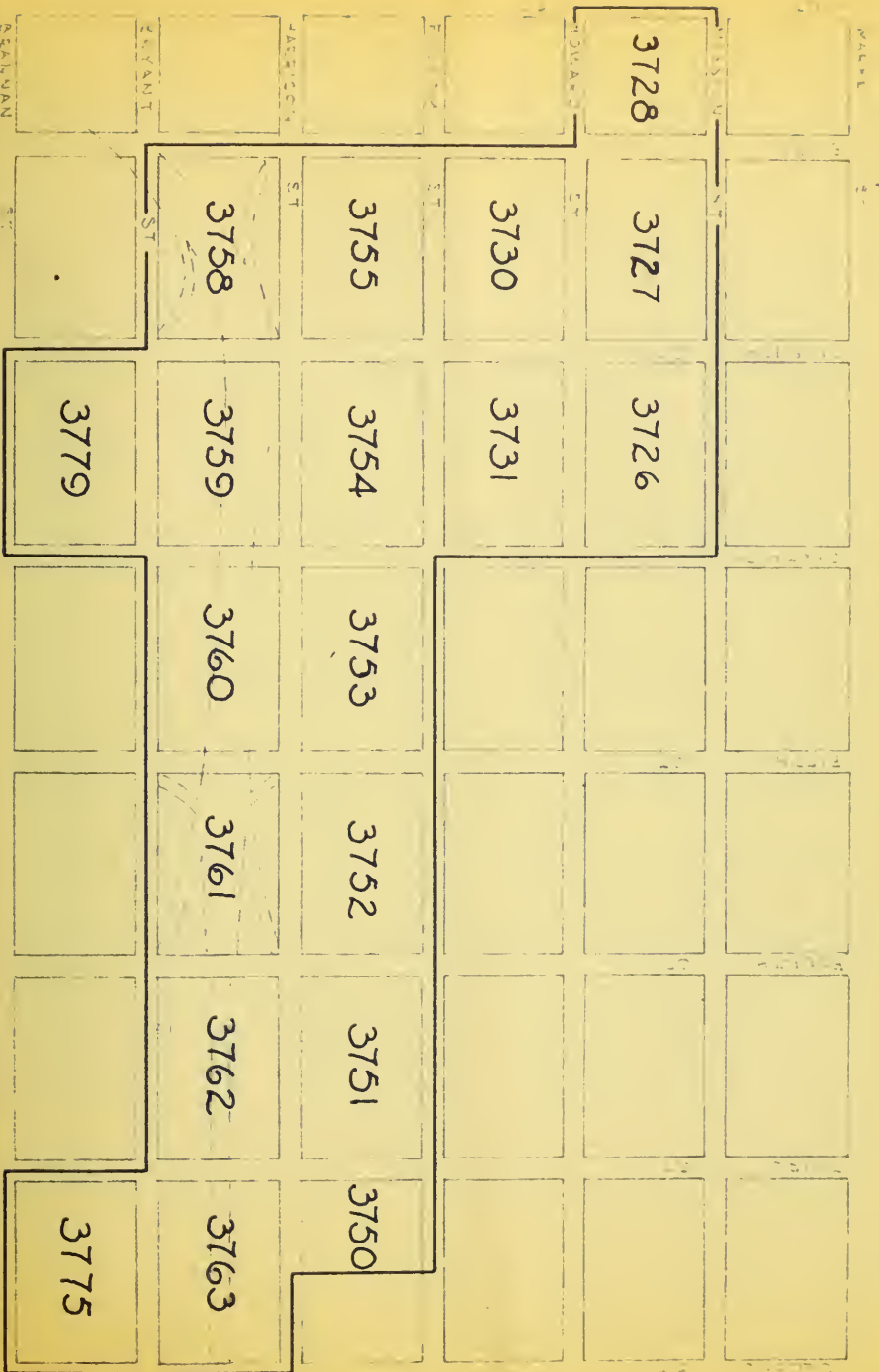
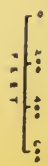
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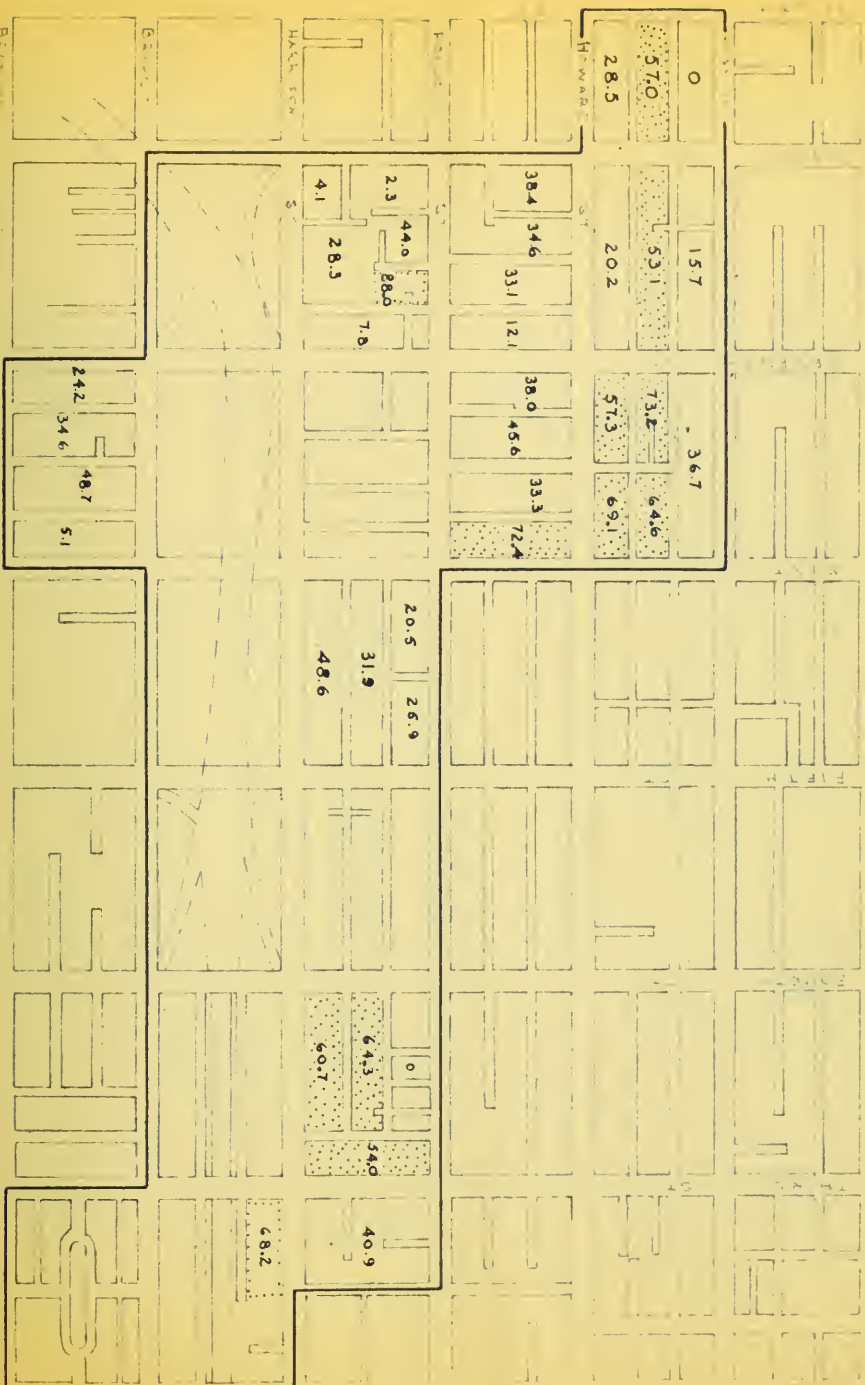
REDEVELOPMENT AREA D SOUTH OF MARKET



II PERCENT OF RESIDENTIAL LAND USE BY SUB-BLOCKS

SOURCE: 1948 LAND USE SURVEY

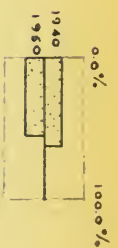
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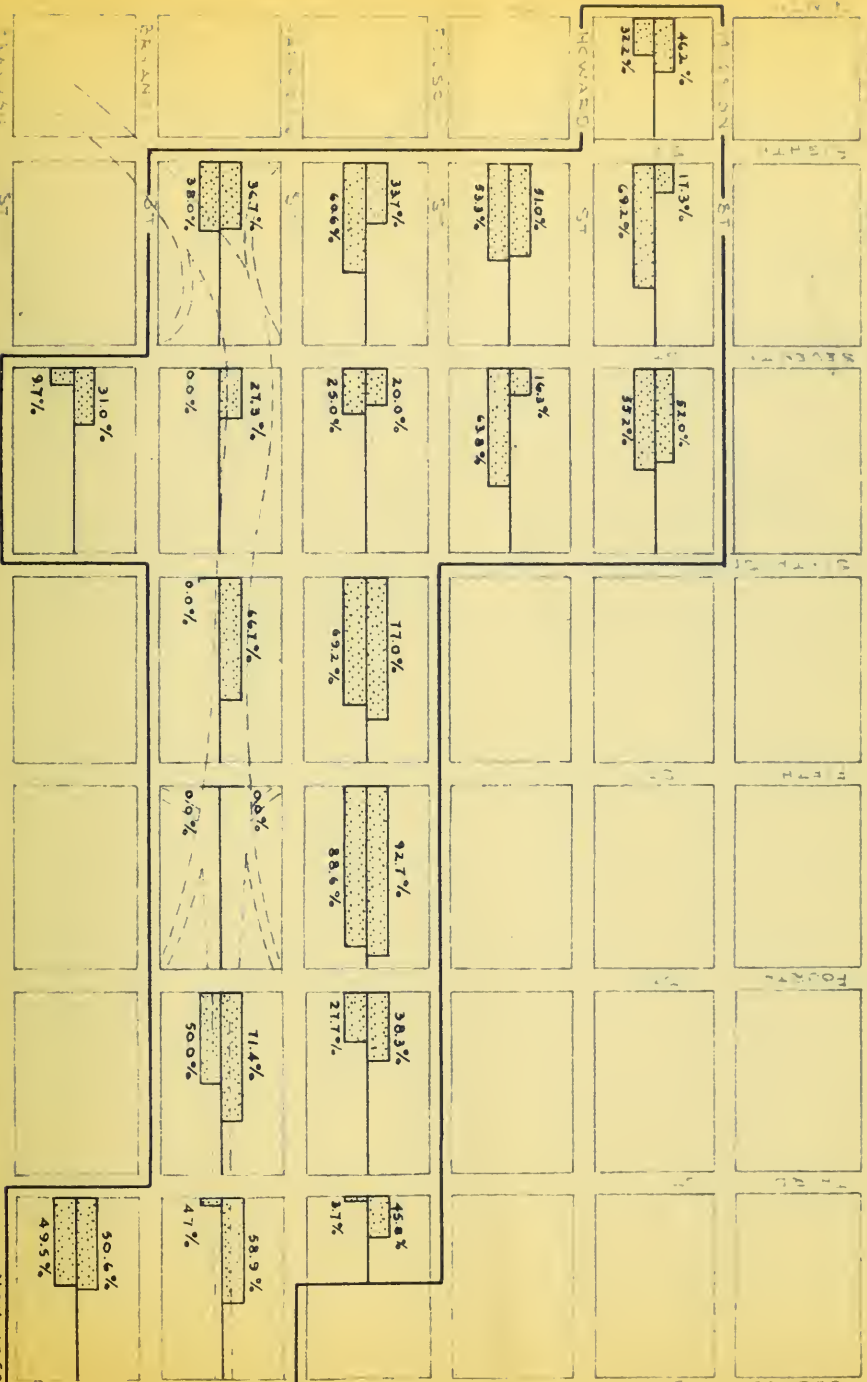
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PERCENT OF DWELLINGS WITHOUT BATH OR NEEDING MAJOR REPAIRS. 1940-1950

SOURCE. U.S. CENSUS

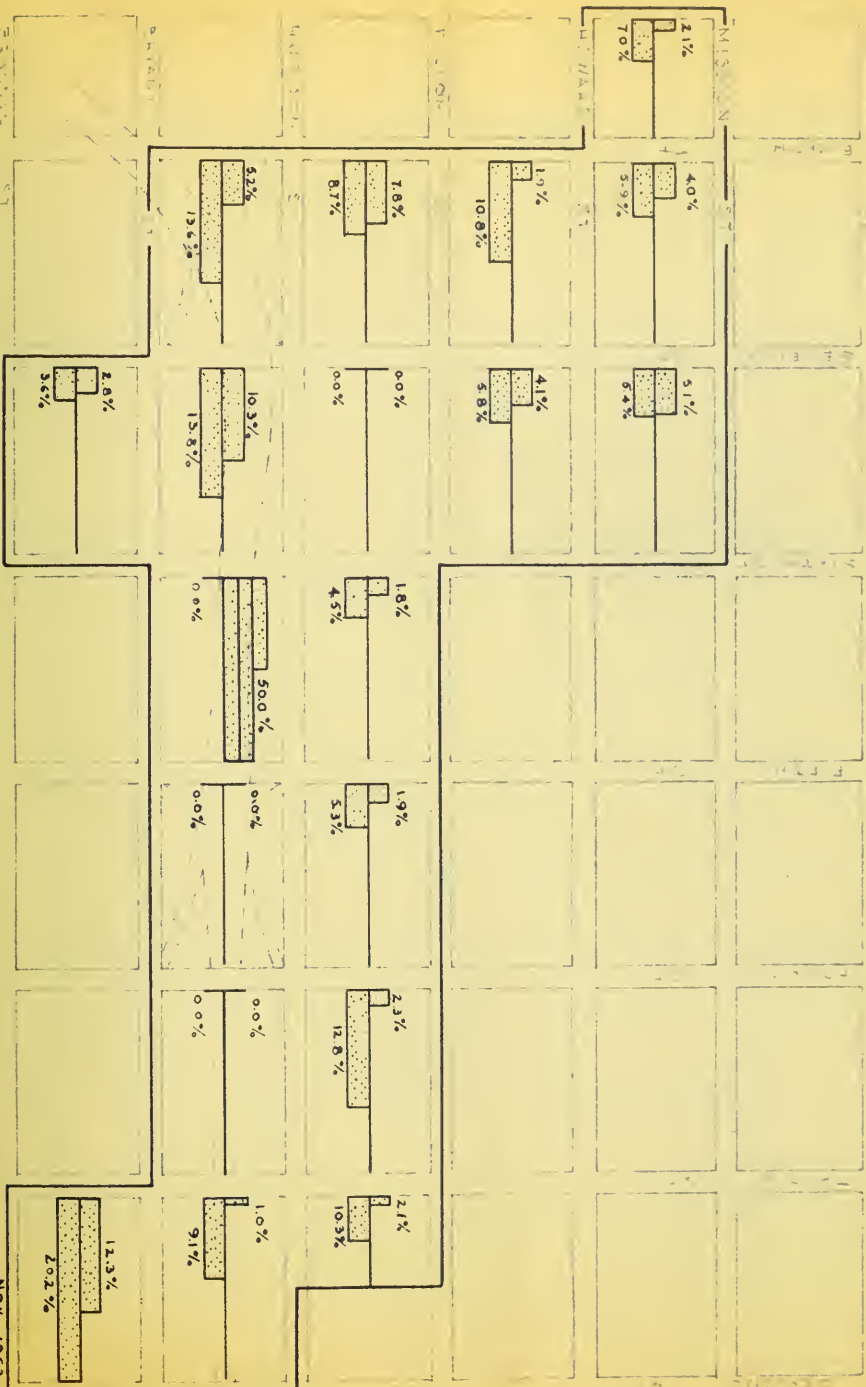
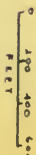
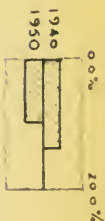


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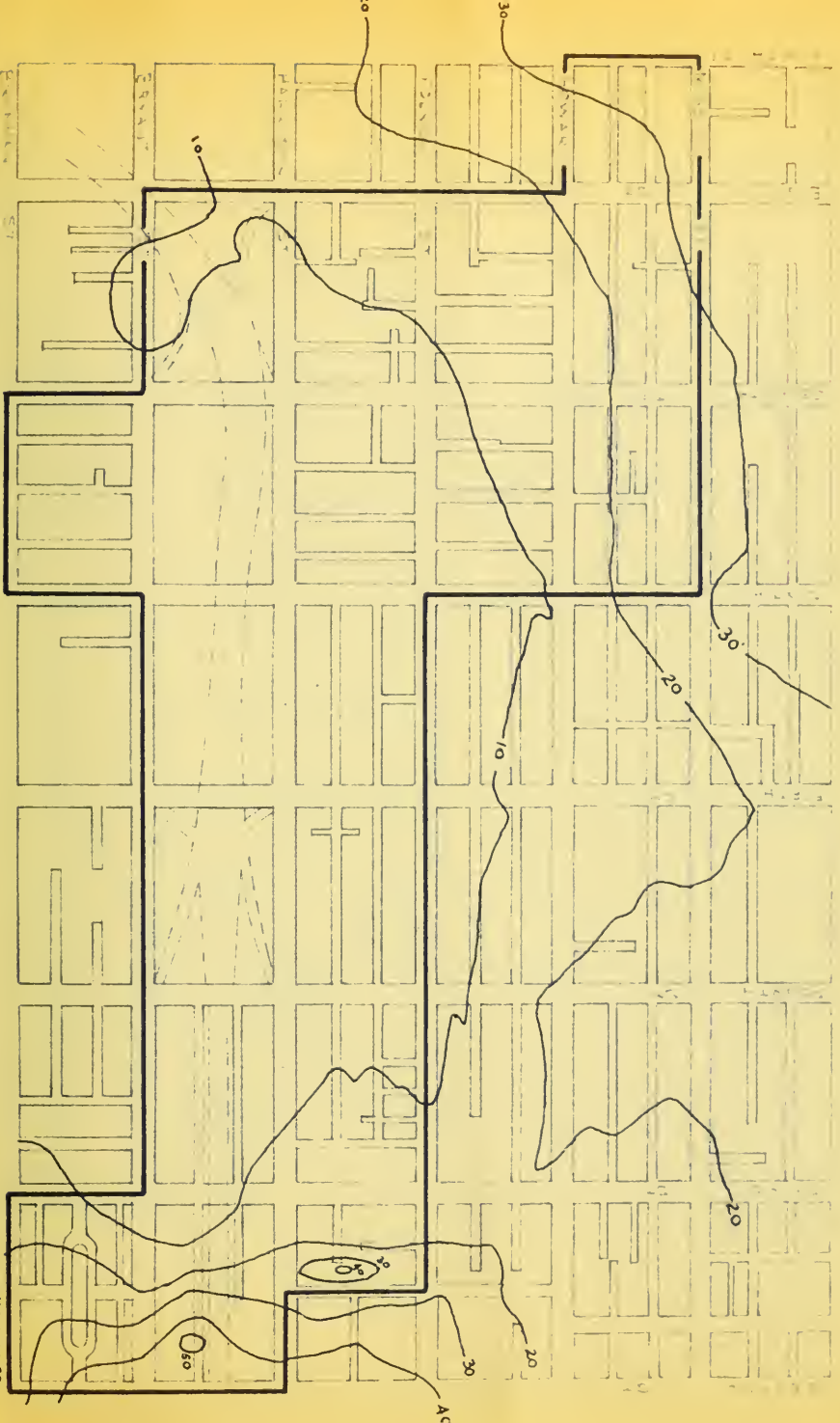
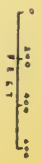


PERCENT OF DWELLINGS OCCUPIED BY MORE THAN 1.51 PERSONS PER ROOM BY BLOCK - 1940-1950

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS



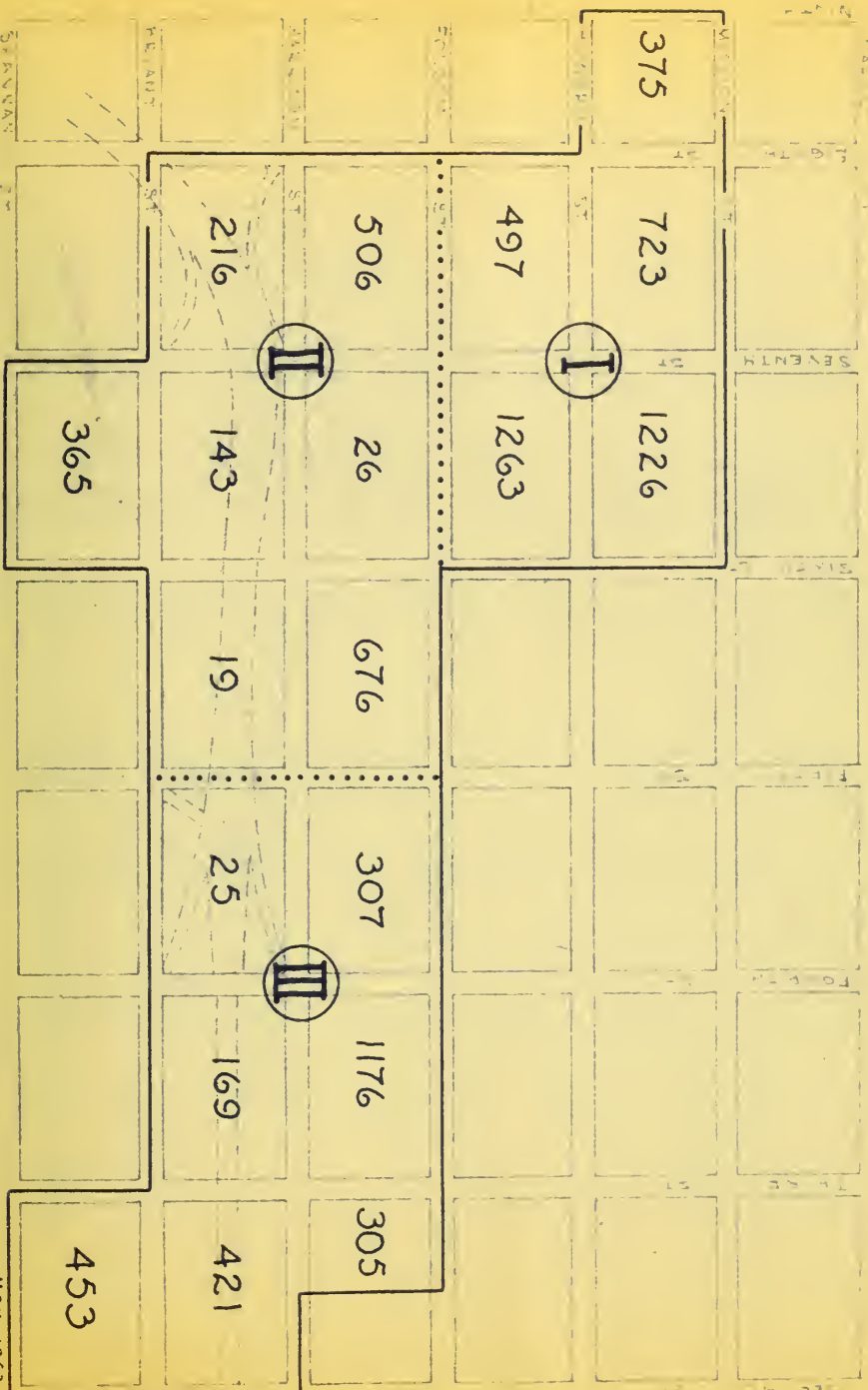
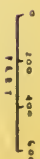
V TOPOGRAPHY IN THE SOUTH OF MARKET REDEVELOPMENT AREA



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THREE SECTIONS OF THE SOUTH OF MARKET REDEVELOPMENT AREA WITH 1950 POPULATION BY BLOCK

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS



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